REMARKS

Applicants request favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1, 2, 5-13, and 16-23 are pending in this application, with Claims 1, 12, and 23 being independent.

Claims 1, 5, 6, 12, 16, 17, and 23 have been amended. Applicants submit that support for these amendments can be found, for example, at least in paragraphs 43 and 44 of the specification. Therefore, no new matter has been added.

Claims 1-2, 5-13 and 16-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,621,810 (Suzuki et al.), in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,809,366 (Yamakawa et al.). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for the reasons discussed below.

As recited in independent Claim 1, the present invention includes, *inter alia*, the features of difficulty determination means for determining whether a determination by a specific-image determination means is difficult by comparing information about the mounting position of a document to a predetermined threshold and re-input determination means that determines whether to output a signal urging re-input of image data based on the determination by said difficulty determination means. With these features, an apparatus can determine based on the position of a document whether it will be difficult to determine if the document contains a specific image and, if so, output a signal urging re-input of the input image data. In this manner, if the specific-image determination will be difficult (i.e., require complex math operations), the

user can be signaled to re-input the document and the specific-image determination may be accomplished without reduced difficulty.

Applicants submit that the cited art fails to disclose or suggest at least the above-noted features of Claim 1. As understood by Applicants, Suzuki et al. discloses that a position (i.e., rotation amount) of a document is determined and then based on the determined position of the document, rotated images of a standard pattern are used to perform pattern matching. See Col. 10, lines 8-67. Thus, whereas the invention of Claim 1 determines if a specific-image determination will be difficult based on the position of a document and then outputs a signal urging re-input of the image data, the system of Suzuki et al. merely determines the rotation amount of the document and then takes that rotation into consideration by rotating the standard pattern used for pattern matching. Accordingly, that patent does not disclose or suggest at least the features of determining whether a determination by specific-image determination means is difficult by comparing information about the mounting position of a document to a predetermined threshold and determining whether to output a signal urging re-input of image data based on the determination by the difficulty determination means.

On the other hand, Yamakawa et al. merely discloses a method for calibrating a color copier in which certain points of a scanned image are analyzed and, if the colors of those points deviate from an expected result by more than an allowable range, the user is urged to scan the image again. Thus, that patent likewise fails to disclose or suggest at least the features of determining whether a determination by a specific-image determination means is difficult by comparing information about the mounting position of a document to a predetermined threshold,

and determining whether to output a signal urging re-input of image data based on such a determination.

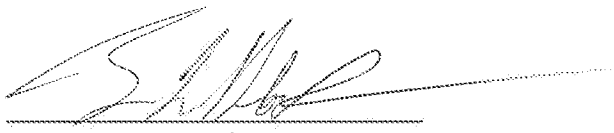
Accordingly, Applicants submit that none of the art of record discloses or suggests at least the above-mentioned features. Moreover, Applicants submit that there is no motivation or suggestion to modify the system of Suzuki et al. based on Yamakawa et al. to output a signal urging re-input of data based on information about a mounting position of a document. Suzuki et al. determines the rotation angle and uses that information in its calculations for pattern matching. Thus, it provides a particular way of handling rotation of a document, namely, by incorporating the rotation amount into its calculations. There is no indication that this is not a perfectly acceptable way of dealing with the rotation of the document, and therefore there is no reason that one skilled in the art would be led to modify Suzuki et al. so that, instead of using the rotation amount in its calculations, the rotation amount is compared to a threshold and then a signal urging re-input is output based on the comparison. Yamakawa et al. certainly provides no motivation for such a change, because the signal urging re-scanning in Yamakawa et al. is not based on the position of a document but instead merely on whether the color information for certain points is within an expected range.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that the invention recited in independent Claim 1 is patentable over the cited art, whether that art is considered individually or in combination. The invention as recited in independent Claims 12 and 23 includes similar features and is believed patentable for reasons similar to Claim 1. The dependent claims are believed patentable for at least the same reasons as the independent claims, as well as for the additional features they recite.

In view of the foregoing, this application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the rejection, and an early Notice of Allowance are respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 721-5427. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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